NOTICE OF PRIVACY PRACTICES

THIS NOTICE DESCRIBES HOW MEDICAL INFORMATION ABOUT YOU MAY BE USED AND DISCLOSED AND HOW YOU GET ACCESS TO THIS INFORMATION. PLEASE REVIEW IT CAREFULLY.

Federal law requires Hospital Sisters Health System (HSHS) and our health care providers to maintain the privacy of your Protected Health Information (PHI). We are required by law to give you this notice and to comply with the terms and conditions of the most current notice.

JOINT NOTICE

HSHS and entities under common ownership and control align with the medical staff and allied health professionals providing treatment at our facilities work together in an Organized Health Care Arrangement (OHCA). As part of the OHCA, we share your PHI as necessary for your treatment, to get paid for services, and to carry out other joint operations. In all cases, we will use and disclose your PHI as described in this notice.

We will not change our practices before we provide you with another Notice of Privacy Practices. You have the right to choose who receives your PHI. We will include your name, location in our facility and religious affiliation in our directory. We may provide. This joint notice describes how the health care professionals and workforce members, including colleagues, medical staff members, students and volunteers, participating in the OHCA use and disclose your health information as part of our joint operations.

Communications to you. We may use your information to remind you of appointments, give you test results, or recommend treatment alternatives or wellness services that may be of interest to you or provide you with surveys regarding your care.

Special and Administrative Procedures. We may disclose your health information in response to a court order. Under most circumstances when the request is made through a subpoena, a discovery request or involves another type of administrative order, your authorization will be obtained before disclosure is permitted.

Required or Permitted by Law. We may disclose PHI to law enforcement officials for purposes such as identifying or locating a suspect, fugitive, or missing person, victims of abuse, neglect or complying with a court order or other law enforcement purposes. In addition, as required by law we may disclose PHI to the process authorities for the protection of the patient or the custodian of law enforcement or in a correctional institution.

Public Health Activities. We may disclose your PHI for public health activities. These activities generally include but are not limited to the following: to prevent or control disease, injury, or disability; to notify an exposure to a communicable disease; to report reactions to medications or products; to notify people of recalls of products they may be using; to notify a patient who may have been exposed to a disease or may be at risk for contracting or spreading a disease or condition; and to notify the appropriate government authority if we believe a patient has been the victim of abuse, neglect, or domestic violence. We will only make disclosures if you agree or when required or authorized by law.

Health Oversight Activities. We may disclose your PHI to health oversight agencies responsible for the activities of health care providers. This may include audit, investigation, and inspection related to oversight of the health care system or government benefit programs. For example, we may disclose your PHI to regulatory agencies conducting a review of our quality of care.

Death. We may disclose PHI to funeral directors as needed and to coroners or medical examiners to identify a deceased person, determine cause of death, or perform other functions required by law. For example, we may provide HIV test results to a funeral director or other persons who prepare a body for burial.

Organ, Eye or Tissue Donation. We may disclose PHI to facilitate the donation and transplantation of organs, eyes and tissue.

Research. We may use and disclose your PHI to conduct research only under certain circumstances and with the following special approval process:

Philanthropy. We may use your information, including but not limited to name, address, gender, date of birth, treating physician, department of service and outcome information, to contact you for our own fundraising purposes which support important activities of our hospital ministries through the Hospital Sisters of St. Francis Foundation. You may opt out of receiving fundraising communications from us at any time.

Serious Threat to Health or Safety. We may disclose your PHI to the necessary authorities if we believe the information could prevent or lessen a serious and imminent threat to the health or safety of you or the public. For example, we may disclose your PHI to the Department of Transportation if your medical condition affects your ability to safely drive a car.

Essential Government Functions. We may use or disclose PHI to carry out certain essential government functions, such as providing services such as Social Security, or to a government agency for national security or intelligence activities, criminal correctional institution and other law enforcement as required by law.

Worker’s Compensation. We may disclose your PHI to the appropriate persons in compliance with workers’ compensation laws. For example, we may provide your employer with information about your work-related injury.

Shared Medical Record/Health Information Exchange. We may maintain your PHI in a shared electronic medical record, known as a regional health information exchange (HIE). Participation in an HIE allows us to share information with others who care for you by name or to your church, if requested.

RECEIVE A COPY OF THIS NOTICE.

You have the right to receive a copy of our Notice of Privacy Practices. We may change our privacy practices described in this notice at any time. Changes to our privacy practices apply to all PHI we maintain. You may choose to review our current notice on our websites, at the registration/admitting desk of any of our facilities, or by contacting the Privacy Officer.

www.steologna.org
www.sacredhearteauclaire.org
www.stjosephshighland.org
www.stmaryshospital.org
www.stjohns.org
www.stmarysdecatur.com
www.stnicolashospital.org
www.stvincentshospital.org
www.stjohnshospital.org
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